

Since her diagnosis, Meghan has gathered her friends and family to participate in Walk MS every May. There is one in my hometown of Springfield, IL. They have raised over \$50,000—Meghan has—to help fight the disease. Meghan said:

I walk to give hope to others who are newly diagnosed with MS. It wasn't easy to hear those words and I think by walking I can help others find ways to be positive about their diagnosis.

The National Multiple Sclerosis Society has been sponsoring Walk MS since 1988 and they have raised \$870 million to support research. The National Multiple Sclerosis Society and people such as Meghan are doing their part, but if the Federal Government is going to do something it has to do its part. We have to make an investment at the National Institutes of Health to complement the efforts by private citizens and generous people across America to fund research in these diseases.

Let me give an example. Jonah Chan and his team at the University of California in San Francisco can teach us a lesson. Dr. Chan's team invented a new technology that led to the discovery of a drug normally used for allergies that has the potential to repair the nervous system in people with MS, but this important discovery needs further Federal investment in biomedical research to move these early findings to promising treatments. Here is what I have done. I have introduced the American Cures Act. It will increase funding at the Nation's top four biomedical research agencies, a 5-percent annual budget increase over and above inflation—the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, the Department of Defense, and the Veterans' Administration medical research programs. The American Cures Act will make funding for critical biomedical research projects less political and more predictable.

Dr. Collins at NIH told me: If you gave us regular funding increases of 5 percent real growth a year for 10 years, I will prove to you that investment will come back tenfold in helping the improvement of health in the United States and reducing the cost of health care. I believe him. I have confidence in him. So why would we not do it? We should be making this commitment.

Cystic fibrosis is another example of federally funded basic research that improves people's lives. The other day Patrick Magner, a sophomore at Loyola Academy in Wilmette, IL, wrote to me about his two young brothers. John is 12 years old, a fully functioning sixth grader, and Matthew is 9 years old and plays sports in school. On the outside, one would never know they are dealing with cystic fibrosis.

John and Matt both take about 30 pills a day to help with their basic digestive functions. This doesn't include several other prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, and daily therapy. They consider themselves lucky because 50 years ago people with cystic fibrosis

didn't live long enough to even attend school. Today, with more advanced treatment, life expectancy for people with cystic fibrosis has increased over 800 percent. Research generated by NIH funding continues to give John and Matt hope for their future.

Their older brother Patrick wrote:

Without this funding, my two younger brothers might not be alive today. This funding is crucial to not only curing cystic fibrosis, but other diseases as well.

That is the promise of the American Cures Act. It allows America's smartest medical researchers to continue to find treatments to stop progression and one day, God willing, find a cure for diseases such as MS, cystic fibrosis, and many more.

Last week I joined Senator BOB CASEY of Pennsylvania on his resolution to support Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week. I would also like to acknowledge the work of Senators WYDEN, HATCH, BROWN, MARKEY, and others on behalf of fighting this terrible disease. Together, along with the American Cures Act, these efforts are improving people's lives.

In order to lead to breakthrough cures for these diseases, we need as a nation—as a government—to take the lead. This research shouldn't be a low-budget priority; I think it should be one of the highest.

I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make Federal funding for biomedical research the true national priority which it is.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Washington.

KING V. BURWELL

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I wish to say a few words about the oral arguments in King v. Burwell that took place last week. Similar to many of us on the floor today, I was here when we fought to get the Affordable Care Act passed. I know firsthand our top priority was to help all Americans get more affordable health care coverage. That goal is clear in the history and in the text of this law. I am confident the Supreme Court will reach the same conclusion; that no matter how the health care exchange is set up in any State, if people qualify for tax credits, people should get them just as Congress intended. Unfortunately, many of our Republican colleagues appear to be hoping for the opposite outcome.

I wish to take a step back to note how appalling this particular situation is. Right now Republicans seem to be rooting for a ruling that would take away millions of Americans' health care coverage. They seem to want a ruling that would put their own constituents' health at risk, and that amounts to a tax increase on 6.5 million people of about \$3,200 a year.

Working families should not have to pay the price for Republican political games, including this Supreme Court

case that they pushed for. If I were a mother who no longer has to worry about what happens if my child breaks an ankle or a struggling worker who now has a little bit more to spend on groceries because their health care insurance no longer costs so much, I would have a lot of tough questions for Republicans right now. I would wonder why on Earth Republicans are so focused on taking apart a law that is helping families get quality, affordable health insurance.

The Affordable Care Act was a critical step forward in terms of making sure our health care system puts patients and families first. Over 10 million Americans have gained coverage in the last 2 years. In fact, today the uninsured rate is at a near-historic low. Health care coverage is more affordable for families across the country, and we are seeing important improvements in the quality of care patients are getting.

We have a lot more work to do to strengthen our health care system, but there is no question that this law is doing what we set out to do: expand access to affordable health care for all—Americans. Democrats want to build on this progress.

So while we see Republicans putting politics first ahead of families' needs, Democrats are going to be focused on building on the Affordable Care Act with more coverage, not less; more affordability, not less; and better quality, not less.

We know the work to put patients first didn't end when the Affordable Care Act passed. That is why we are going to keep working to move our health care system forward, not backward, for our families.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Indiana.

WASTEFUL SPENDING

Mr. COATS. Mr. President, last month I came to the floor to launch what I call the "Waste of the Week." We look at how we spend the taxpayers' dollars. We all know the biggest issue over the past several years is now sort of fading into the ether is the fact that the government continues to spend the taxpayers' money in reckless ways, including not balance our budget and go deeply into deficit spending every year, then borrow to cover the cost, and increase our debt limit from the staggering \$18 trillion-plus and growing. My purpose in coming to the floor was to highlight some examples of this waste.

I wish to step back for a moment to say this follows numerous bipartisan efforts to deal with a larger issue, and that is our debt and deficit, in a way that we can put a budget proposal together to get us out of this mess and stop loading up our children and grandchildren with the responsibilities and costs they probably will not be able to repay without significant sacrifice in terms of their standard of living.

Having failed every one of those over the past 5 years—Simpson-Bowles, the Gang of 6, the Committee of 12, the supercommittee, the dinner committee on which I serve 7 arduous months trying to come to some minimal agreement in terms of how to deal with our debt and deficit because the President blocked every single attempt. I thought the least we could do was look at the simple things, the easy things. We started with—not such a small thing—duplication of efforts in terms of benefits that went to people that were actually illegal totaling \$5.7 billion, the difference between Social Security disability and unemployment insurance.

Last week I talked about duplication. There are 52 programs—through the Federal Government, through a number of agencies, to provide assistance on economic development. Do we need 52? Can't we consolidate some of these down to three or four? Why does every agency in the government have to duplicate what is being done in every other agency? We talked about the savings that would come from that.

It is my understanding that the minority leader and the minority whip—No. 1 and 2 on the Democratic side—came down here and talked about the fact that in the budget we may be cutting funding for the National Institutes of Health and how tragic it would be if we took one penny away from them. I can give them a very simple example on the third week of Waste of the Week in terms of how they can save some money or better utilize some money through the National Institutes of Health.

This is a study for which I have to give credit to my former Senate colleague, Dr. Tom Coburn. For years Dr. Coburn highlighted examples of government waste, fraud, and abuse. He was a champion of transparency and made great strides in giving the American people a more accountable government.

So I come here today to share one of Dr. Coburn's taxpayer issues he brought before the Senate, and I think it needs to be brought here now. How timely it is when I was just preceded unknowingly by those who came to the floor saying we can't take a penny out of NIH because it goes to critical research.

I support NIH. I think it is an important agency. We need to do some of that research. But does NIH need to do this: Does NIH need to fund a study to determine the benefits of massage by using 18 white rabbits from New Zealand that receive 30-minute massages four times a day?

According to co-medical director of the Ohio State University Sports Medical Center, "We tried to mimic Swedish massage because anecdotally, it's the most popular technique used by athletes."

That study amounted to a cost of \$387,000 of taxpayer money given in a grant. Why didn't they just ask the

football team? Why didn't they just walk in the locker room and say: Hey guys, you have just been beat up for 60 minutes and you probably have a lot of aches and pains. A good hot shower and a massage—does that help?

I think every one of us—we have all had aches and pains—understands that a massage helps relieve the soreness. Do we need to spend \$387,000 on a study and take 18 white rabbits and give them massages four times a day on taxpayer dollars to prove the point that massages actually work?

So once again, while this is a small thing, we have to add to our chart showing that we continue to expend taxpayer money and waste taxpayer money on frivolous things that are not needed. You can point out every egregious agency spending.

Until we are willing to have the political will to stand up and deal with the runaway entitlements, these discretionary programs will continue to be squeezed. Unfortunately, we have come to a roadblock under this Presidency in terms of any effort left to deal with the larger issue of runaway spending and runaway debt. This burden is being placed on the future of America and the children and grandchildren of Americans and that is generational theft, and it is irresponsible for this body to not take action.

At the very least, can we not at least do the most simple of things in terms of eliminating waste of taxpayer dollars through duplication, and unnecessary studies?

Eliminating waste like this will not change Washington's long-term fiscal picture, but it does point out that it is important to ensure that taxpayer funding of projects like this keep, like the Energizer bunny, going and going.

I hate to say this, but sadly, after the project was over, the 18 New Zealand white rabbits were euthanized. It is my hope that in going forward, instead of killing rabbits, we can kill taxpayer-funded government waste like this project.

I see my colleague from Arizona has come to the floor. I have just finished the latest "Waste of the Week." We will be back next week with "Waste of the Week" No. 4.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I would like to thank my friend and colleague from Indiana for his "Waste of the Week" speech, although I wish it were the "Waste of the Day" event that we celebrate. But I wish to thank him for his steadfast and longstanding efforts at eliminating government waste and mismanagement. If we are going to convince the American people that we need to make significant sacrifices, we have to start with an efficient government that does not waste the taxpayers' dollars. So I thank my friend from Indiana.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to address the Senate in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING BORIS NEMTSOV

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, last week Senator GRAHAM and I introduced a Senate resolution condemning the murder of my friend and a true Russian Patriot, Boris Nemtsov. The resolution calls upon the Russian Federation to support an independent investigation into Boris Nemtsov's murder and take immediate steps to end its suppression of free speech and justice. It also urges President Obama to continue to sanction human rights violators in the Russian Federation and to increase U.S. support to like-minded human rights activists in Russia.

My friends, I was devastated to learn of Boris's murder in Moscow last month. My thoughts and prayers remain with his family and many friends in Russia and around the world. With his death, the struggle for free speech and human rights in Russia has suffered another shattering blow.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Boris Nemtsov was one of Russia's earliest and most vigorous economic and political reformers, a champion of liberalization and democracy. His leadership of Russia's laboratory of reform eventually brought him to Moscow, where he served as Deputy Prime Minister and was once a favorite for the Russian Presidency.

But then Russia took a dark turn when Vladimir Putin entered the Kremlin. Boris was one of the first to warn of the coming Putin dictatorship, even when many of his fellow liberals could not see it. As Putin's grip on power tightened, Boris's hopes for a free, just, and economically vibrant Russia, at home and at peace in Europe, were dashed. Yet, even after multiple arrests and countless threats on his life, Boris never stopped fighting the corruption and lawlessness of the Putin regime, never stopped seeking to advance democracy, human rights, free speech, free market reforms, and the rule of law.

In December 2011 Boris Nemtsov helped mobilize the largest anti-Kremlin demonstrations since the early 1990s, leading tens of thousands of Russians to march in protest of widespread fraud and corruption in the parliamentary elections. He stood up to harsh laws that vastly expanded the definition of "treason," increased government control over the media, and limited the scope and activities of opposition parties and civil society organizations—laws that Vladimir Putin and his cronies have exploited to intimidate the Russian people into obedience.

Shortly before his death, Boris Nemtsov was reportedly planning to release a report on Russia's military involvement in Ukraine. At the protest march scheduled 2 days after his murder, he was set to demand "the immediate end to the war and any aggressive actions towards Ukraine." He investigated and saw through the fabricated